

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

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A parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America · Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

Monthly Newsletter: September 2020

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

“Even if I am far away from you in body, I am with you in spirit” (Colossians 2:5). Though these challenging times mean we must keep apart, “God is with us” still beats in our hearts! Let’s all pray hard for the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to end, as well as for the assignment of a new presbyter, so we can soon regather safely and healthily for worship and fellowship as a church family again. In the meantime, this newsletter is bringing a bit of church to you while we can’t be in church together. **We look forward to seeing you again soon!**

Fresh Starts

September 1 is Church New Year. New Year’s Day in September?! Well, yes. It’s a date the Church inherited from the Hebrew culture and Greco-Roman social order in which it was born, tied to the rhythms of ancient agriculture and post-harvest tax bookkeeping. By falling “out of sync” with our secular celebration on January 1, it reminds us that God always welcomes fresh starts and new beginnings, no matter where we are on the calendar. In the Bible readings for the day, we hear Christ Jesus starting his public ministry as the Messiah with these words: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... He has sent me... to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:16-22). As his followers, what shall we do, in terms of deepening our faith and spirituality, to make this new church year a “year of the Lord’s favor” in our own lives?

A Human Habitat for God

On **September 8**, the Church marks the **Birth of the Virgin Mary**. In the Bible readings for the day, we read these mysterious words: “Wisdom has built her house” (Proverbs 9:1). Who is this wisdom? “Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24). And who is his house? Mary, in whose body he, as God, took on human flesh and was born into human

life as one of us. In celebrating her birth, the Church reminds us that the **Incarnation** — a word whose Latin roots mean “in the flesh” — was God’s well-laid plan for our reconciliation with him. God intended to come to us “in the flesh” as a human in the person of Christ Jesus, so that we humans, in turn, “can share in God’s nature” (2 Peter 1:4). Mary was born to serve that purpose in his plan. The child she carried, gave birth to, and mothered is Jesus, who is **Immanuel**, which means “God is with us” (Matthew 1:22-23).

The Cross: A Paradox

On **September 14**, the Church celebrates the **Elevation of the Holy Cross**. In the cross of Christ Jesus, we see the cost of human sin and the depth of God’s love, wrapped up in a paradox: a seeming victim turns out to be a victor, because his death leads to resurrection! God promises us neither a bed of roses nor endless days of sunshine, but rather a path through life’s worry, weariness, and woe that leads to victory in him. Honoring the cross on this holy day reminds us of Jesus’ call to set aside egos and appetites of ours that block us from reaching victory in God: “All who want to be my followers must say ‘no’ to themselves, carry their crosses, and follow me daily” (Luke 9:23).

MORE! ➡

Calendar: September 2020

Tuesday, September 1

Church New Year

Sunday, September 6

Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

No worship services due to COVID precautions per our bishop's directives

Tuesday, September 8

Birth of the Virgin Mary

No worship services due to COVID precautions per our bishop's directives

Sunday, September 13

Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Sunday Before Elevation of the Cross

No worship services due to COVID precautions per our bishop's directives

Monday, September 14

Elevation of the Holy Cross

No worship services due to COVID precautions per our bishop's directives

Sunday, September 20

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Sunday After Elevation of the Cross

No worship services due to COVID precautions per our bishop's directives

Sunday, September 27

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

No worship services due to COVID precautions per our bishop's directives

Milestones

"Rejoice with those who rejoice" (Romans 12:15). Best wishes to our brothers and sisters in Christ who are celebrating special milestones this month! **Birthdays:** Rose Soulis (September 21), John Romanyak (September 24), Pañi Karen Miklos (September 28), and Mary Ann Richards (September 29). God grant you many years!

"Mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15). Heartfelt condolences to our brothers and sisters in Christ who lost loved ones

recently. **Deaths:** Nancy Kastelan (August 13), wife of Nick Kastelan, and Isabel Fonseca (August 14), mother of Lucy Fonseca and mother-in-law of Russ Daniluk. Eternal memory and blessed rest to them!

Church Online!

While we can't attend church in person, attend it online. Our diocese's **Christ the Saviour Cathedral** livestreams Sunday Divine Liturgy at 9 a.m. at this link: tinyurl.com/y4lwz8zb. The **Nuns of Holy Transfiguration Monastery** livestream Sunday Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m. (and much more!) at this link: tinyurl.com/y6ncnvf2.

Keep Praying for a New Presbyter...

God, at the moment, our church is a family of faith in need of a steady father. Thank you for the ministry of our late longtime presbyter, Father Michael Shuster, and for all the visiting presbyters who have taken care of us since his death. Please help a new permanent presbyter come our way and make his home among us soon, to lead us faithfully and help us grow in spirit and numbers. We trust that you know our needs and will provide what is best for us, for you take care of the fatherless and the widowed. Amen.

Don't Forget to Donate!

"Blessed are those who are generous" (Proverbs 22:9). Thanks to all who are keeping up your holy habit of Christian stewardship by mailing your routine offerings and pledges to our treasurer: **Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, c/o Lydia Pinkowski, 7431 Glasgow Rd, Weeki Wachee FL 34613**. Let's all do our part to cover ongoing parish expenses and ready our church for eventual reopening by sending in checks payable to **Holy Trinity Church** — no cash, please. Thank you for your much needed financial support amid these challenging times!